

# E-rate Essentials

## MISSOURI CONNECT & LEARN INITIATIVE

### What bandwidth do I need to support digital learning?

Students need sufficient bandwidth in order to take advantage of digital learning in the classroom. Today, “sufficient” means at least 100 kbps of bandwidth per student, but that number is growing quickly. The Federal Communications Commission suggests a 2018 connectivity target of 1 Mbps per student in order for schools to truly take advantage of technology’s ability to transform teaching and learning. Many schools desire this robust connectivity for their classrooms, but lack the funds necessary to obtain it.

### What is E-rate?

The Schools and Libraries Program, also known as E-rate, is a federal program designed to help public schools and libraries afford telecommunication services. As of December 2014, **\$3.9 BILLION** is available annually to help subsidize these costs. School districts can receive federal reimbursements for up to 90% of the cost of their connectivity services.

In order to receive federal reimbursement, districts must file two forms: the Form 470 and the Form 471. A district files a Form 470 to solicit bids for a specified list of products and services. After a competitive bidding process, the district will select a winning vendor and file a Form 471 to request reimbursement for these services. Services that are eligible for reimbursement fall into two groups, known in E-rate as Category 1 and Category 2.

### Category 1 vs. Category 2: What’s eligible for reimbursement?

CATEGORY	EXPLANATION	ELIGIBLE SERVICES
<b>Category 1 (Internet Access &amp; Wide Area Network)</b>	<b>Connectivity between sites.</b> C1 covers monthly service charges and non-recurring/construction costs for direct Internet Access and WAN connectivity between campuses, whether it is leased or owned	Fiber (lit and dark) Wireless (e.g., microwave) Cable modem DSL Satellite service Broadband over power lines T-1, T-3 Dial-up Voice services
<b>Category 2 (Internal Connections)</b>	<b>Connectivity within sites.</b> C2 covers Wi-Fi products and services, usually with a non-recurring charge.	Access points Antennas and cabling Caching Network switches Firewall services and components Routers Racks UPS/battery back up Supporting software Managed services (e.g., Wi-Fi) Basic maintenance, repair, and installation

## Recommended E-rate Timeline for School Districts



### How much funding do schools receive?

Funding is based on the income level of your students, which is usually derived from the number of students who qualify for NSLP free or reduced price lunches. If you don't offer a hot lunch program, you can submit a survey to your families to determine their income level.

INCOME <small>Measured by % of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program</small>	CATEGORY 1		CATEGORY 2	
	URBAN DISCOUNT	RURAL DISCOUNT	URBAN DISCOUNT	RURAL DISCOUNT
Less than 1%	20%	25%	20%	25%
1% to 19%	40%	50%	40%	50%
20% to 34%	60%	70%	60%	70%
50% to 74%	80%	80%	80%	80%
75% to 100%	90%	90%	85%	85%

The Governor's Office and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education also established **\$6M in state matching funds** to assist E-rate applicants with the cost of special construction for Category 1 services. This state matching fund will **cover any remaining costs of your fiber special construction** after your E-rate discount reimbursement amount. For example, if you have a 60% discount rate, the state matching fund will contribute 30% and USAC will contribute 10% to cover 100% of your construction cost.

### About the Missouri Connect & Learn Initiative

In 2017, the Missouri Governor's Office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education partnered with the national non-profit EducationSuperHighway to launch the Missouri Connect & Learn Initiative to support increased access to affordable, high-speed Internet in every classroom in Missouri.

Through the Initiative, EducationSuperHighway offers technical assistance, upgrade tools, and procurement resources at no cost to ensure schools have the broadband needed for digital learning.



### Contact

Christine Yoo  
EducationSuperHighway  
[Christine.Yoo@educationsuperhighway.org](mailto:Christine.Yoo@educationsuperhighway.org)

Chris Schneider  
State E-rate Coordinator  
[Schneider@more.net](mailto:Schneider@more.net)

Jeff Falter  
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
[DSM@dese.mo.gov](mailto:DSM@dese.mo.gov)